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disadvantage, and he was wind-bound to the north of the Bahr el Ghazal. Owing to the representations of the British Acting Consul-General at Alexandria, His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt had sent instructions to the Governor of the Sudan to forward such assistance as might be necessary to Mr. Petherick.

4. *Letters from* SAMUEL W. BAKER, ESQ., F.R.G.S., *on his Travels by the Atbara River and its Tributaries, in Nubia, dated September 10th, 1862.*

THE author spent some months shooting in the neighbourhood of the tributaries of the Atbara River, the single confluent of the Nile, and visited a large amount of country that had previously been undescribed. The chief tributaries of the Atbara are the Settite, Salaam, and Angarep; he considers the former to be the parent of the river. These streams, which are copious near their sources in the high lands of Abyssinia and pour increased volumes of water during the rains, are barely capable of reaching the Nile in the dry season. They are absorbed in sands and lost in fissures. Even the Atbara itself dwindles down to an insignificant stream before entering the Nile. They traverse a land that has great natural fertility, and is cultivated for cotton. A curious colony of natives of Darfur, called Tokrowris, cultivate cotton extensively: they are pilgrims who have settled by the way, on their return from Mecca. The author desires to draw attention to these large and fertile districts as a possible source of an abundant supply of cotton. Mr. Baker had excellent sport in shooting elephants and other game. He dates his letter from Khartum, whence he proposed proceeding up the White Nile for the purposes of exploration. He speaks strongly of the wretched state of lawlessness into which the White Nile races have been driven by the unscrupulous conduct of the native servants of traders on that river.

THE PRESIDENT said there were several other communications which there would be no time to read. They had received a few words from Captain Burton, who had ascended a mountain, which he calls the Elephant Mountain, in the Bight of Benin; then they had a communication from Mr. Moffat, brother of the late lamented Mrs. Livingstone, suggesting the employment of camels for explorations in Southern Africa; and they had received the following communication from the Foreign Office:—

“I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Committee of the Royal Geographical Society, an extract from a despatch from the British acting Consul-General at Alexandria, relative to the difficulties in which Mr. Consul Petherick and his party were placed in the White Nile, according to information received from Khartum, on the 11th of August last.

“I am to add that, on the pressing representations of Mr. Consul Sanders,

the Egyptian Government has sent orders to the Governor of the Soudan to take such steps as may be necessary to render assistance to Consul Petherick."

When His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt was elected an honorary Fellow of the Society, he mentioned to His Highness the great service he might render to the cause of geographical science by assisting explorers, adding, "But, Sir, our operations extend beyond your frontiers;" upon which His Highness said, "I pray you to consider that my frontiers are very elastic." So powerful a man as he was, it was gratifying to find that his Government had at once supported us in this manner.

Adverting to the expedition of Captains Speke and Grant, the President said he much regretted that so long a history of misfortune had been read to the Society. It was necessary to explain the difficulties that had occurred, and it only showed the uncertainty that attends travel in Africa. On the first exploration Speke and Burton in seven months traversed the whole of the region from Zanzibar to the lakes, both of which they discovered; and now, though equally zealous, Speke had found the greatest difficulties thrown in the way of his progress, owing to the wars which have broken out among the different tribes. The condition of any portion of the interior of Africa at one season is not to be calculated upon for the next season. We could only join in the hopeful wish expressed by Speke in his letter, and in the belief that his energy and that of his associate will enable them to overcome all obstacles.

Should they ever reach Lake Victoria Nyanza, and get to the northern end of it, then the prospects would be most cheering; because not only has Consul Petherick gone up the river towards Gondokoro, but there are three adventurous ladies, who, having freighted a steamer at their own expense, are now proceeding beyond Khartum, up the Nile. From having that steamer at their disposal they are likely to shoot past Consul Petherick; and it is therefore not improbable that the first assistance which will be brought to Speke, if he arrives at that point of his destination, will be brought to him by ladies. It is quite an original adventure; he knew nothing like it in the history of modern travel.

Besides these two expeditions there was a third, which that intrepid explorer, Mr. Baker, was carrying out. Seldom had a paper been read which exhibited a greater amount of gallant and bold exploration on the part of a sportsman. Mr. Baker really went there in the first instance in search of wild animals, but it would be seen what an extensive addition he has made to our geographical knowledge of a large portion of Africa. He has done this entirely at his own expense, with no assistance from the Government; and if in future times the Society should desire to seek a man to carry out explorations in distant regions, Mr. Baker is one of the best men they could select for such a purpose.

As Colonel Rigby was present, the President took the opportunity of acknowledging how much geographers are indebted to him as Consul at Zanzibar, for the assistance he has rendered on all occasions to our African travellers.

COLONEL RIGBY said, as he was resident at Zanzibar for a year after the departure of Captain Speke, he could explain the causes of some of the unforeseen difficulties which the expeditionary party had met with. In the first place, shortly after Captain Speke left the coast, a famine of unusual severity occurred all over East Africa: so much so that the poor famished wretches came from the interior in search of food to Zanzibar; while towards the eastern shores of Lake Nyassa, ten able-bodied slaves were given in exchange for one bullock. The effect of this famine was to prevent supplies reaching Captain Speke from Zanzibar. Supplies of various sorts had been sent out, but neither these nor any letters had ever reached him from the time he had advanced a few days into the interior; the caravans not being able to

come down in consequence of the famine. Another cause was the serious rebellion which broke out at Zanzibar. A chief tribe there, who are all slave-dealers, rose in rebellion against the Sultan; and when that rebellion was put down with British assistance, most of the people engaged in it went over to the mainland, and they have spread themselves over the interior, making slaves of the natives, and selling them. He had received a letter from Captain Speke, written on the 28th of April, explaining the state of that country in consequence of these marauding Arabs from Zanzibar. He had also a letter from Colonel Pelly, dated in July last, stating that he had heard from Speke, who was at Kagwé on the 30th of September, 1861, and that he was sending up at his request a caravan of fifty men and goods. If Captain Speke had to await the arrival of those men at Kagwé, it would of course be a considerable time before he could advance to the north, to Lake Nyanza. It was a lucky circumstance that Mr. Petherick had also been delayed, otherwise he would have arrived south much sooner than Captain Speke's expedition could possibly do. A great many Arabs and Africans at Zanzibar have travelled over that country, and they all agreed that a very large river flowed into Lake Nyanza from the west, which they called, after the name of the country, Ougonda. They state that the Sultan of Ougonda is a very powerful chief, having a large army, and about 2000 war-boats on the lake. It is not known that any great river issues from the lake, either on the north, east, or south; but, from native accounts, he thought it probable that the River Juba comes out of the lake on the east coast. The Juba is entirely unexplored. The Baron Van der Decken, a Hanoverian, who is now in Eastern Africa, has written to Germany to purchase a steamer, and has applied to the Prussian Government for a company of sailors and marines, for the purpose of exploring the Juba. He has already reached the mountains of Kilimanjaro without any hostility on the part of the natives, and he is waiting at Zanzibar till this steamer arrives.

It must appear strange why the slaves who come down to the coast should be all brought from the west of Lake Nyassa. The reason is that the whole tract of country lying between the coast and the east side of the lake is almost entirely depopulated, from the effects of the slave-trade. The Arabs have recently built a vessel on the lake for the purpose of conveying them across. They are brought down to Quiloa, the great slave-port on the east coast, by the M'bisa tribes. They generally drive down young children when they can procure a sufficient number of them, after having put the men and women to death. They bring down 2000 and 3000 children in one caravan, and dispose of them chiefly at Quiloa. If the trade is not put a stop to, in a few years the whole of the rich country whence the slaves are brought, and which Dr. Livingstone has visited and described as producing such beautiful cotton, will become desert. Dr. Röschér was unfortunately killed by some robbers at nearly four days' journey from the east coast of Nyassa: the surviving servant returned to Zanzibar. The murderers were seized by the chief of that country and sent in chains to Zanzibar, where they were put to death.

In reply to Mr. Craufurd, it was stated by Colonel Rigby that of the slave-children brought down to Quiloa, about 15,000 had been taken north to the Persian Gulf and ports on the east coast of Africa, and 10,000 kept in Zanzibar; and, in reply to Colonel Sykes, that it would take four months at least before the convoy of supplies sent from Zanzibar could reach Captain Speke at Kagwé.

COLONEL SYKES, M.P., observed that Captain Speke and Captain Grant were placed in a position of very great difficulty, in which their moral courage and physical endurance had been tried to the utmost. From two letters he had received from Captain Grant he learnt that with all their energy they have been brought to a standstill, and the object they had in view absolutely stopped. Captain Grant was separated for some months from Captain Speke,

and surrounded with difficulties. Under these circumstances the Society would make allowance for the impediments they had met with, for it would be found that nothing has been wanting on the part of these two resolute explorers. He still hoped that they might be enabled to make their way; but from the state of anarchy in which the country now is, the difficulties they have to encounter are no doubt very extensive and lamentable, and it may so occur that they will have to retrace their steps and return to Zanzibar.

Captain Speke in a part of his letter expressed regret that he did not take a different route, and instead of following their former route up to Nianza (and they have not got so far as Captain Speke did on the former occasion, for they have only got to Kagwé,) that they had landed at Mombas, and so cut into the northern head of the lake by the flank of Kilimanjaro. That would have shortened the distance one-half, supposing they could have passed the Kilimanjaro range. Beyond the mountain-range of Kilimanjaro no doubt the route is practicable, and if they had taken that route they might have avoided the difficulties which now beset them. It is a question also whether the Nianza could not be reached by the river Dana. Officers in the survey branch of the Indian navy having ascended the river for a considerable distance.

The PRESIDENT repeated what he had said, that it was impossible for Captain Speke and Captain Grant to advance at present as successfully as before, owing to the changed condition of the country and warlike relations of the inhabitants. If the present route had been found difficult, it was the route of Captain Speke's own choice. He had a high admiration of these gentlemen, and fully concurred in all that Colonel Sykes had said of them. With regard to those adventurous ladies who have gone up in a steamer from Khartum, he hoped Mr. Tinné would be kind enough to tell the meeting what he knew about them.

MR. TINNÉ said he had very little information to give with regard to what had taken place, and he feared that what he had to say would be of very little interest to geographers. These ladies are not scientific—they have only the virtue of a great love for travel. It is not the first exploit that they have been engaged in, but he believed it is the greatest that they have ever undertaken. Having arrived at Khartum, they did not find the place so agreeable for residence as they expected. It was their intention to have resided there during the four winter months, and to have made explorations from Khartum as their head-quarters, in different directions, including Abyssinia and Upper Nubia. Circumstances, however, obliged them to change their plans, and they proceeded up the White Nile in search of a site for a habitation; but, not meeting with any to their satisfaction, they were driven at last to the plan of hiring a steamer. Fortunately the Viceroy's brother, Prince Halim, who was once Governor of the Sudán, had a steamer there for his own use, and he left her there when he returned to Cairo, in charge of a French gentleman, who was his agent. The ladies were enabled to make a contract with this gentleman for the hire of the steamer. While one of the party returned to Khartum to negotiate and complete the contract for the steamer, the other two were left at Mount Hemaya, where they were still encamped at the date of the last advices in July, just as the steamer had arrived. He believed they intended to proceed immediately further up the river and to go to Gondokoro. If he received any further accounts, he would be happy to communicate the information to the Society.

What surprised him was, as there were accounts of Consul Petherick and of Mr. Baker up to August, that neither of these gentlemen in any of their accounts should have mentioned such a singular circumstance as a steamer at the disposal of any parties at Khartum, or that there was a party of ladies in their immediate locality.

His correspondents described the scenery of the White Nile as extremely beautiful, resembling in many respects Virginia Water, being finely wooded down to the water's edge, with many islands, distant mountains and highlands, water-lilies in the river, and all sorts of attractions for the traveller. He had not heard from these ladies anything of the dangers that had been mentioned in other accounts. In every letter he received they say, "We are perfectly safe; we place implicit reliance in the Government, and the only drawback is the continuance of the horrid slave-trade." The slave-trade was going on there, in spite of all that the Viceroy can do or the laws can say against it, from the causes that had been mentioned. He could only hope that public opinion would be brought to bear upon the Egyptian Government, and thus help to put a stop to this traffic.

The President adjourned the sitting to the 8th of December.

Third Meeting, Monday, December 8th, 1862.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATION.—*Walter Cope, Esq., was presented upon his Election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Captain Robert B. Baker; Captain Sir John Swinburne, BART., R.N.; Rev. Julian Edmund Woods; John Bramley-Moore, M.P.; Robert Holland; Horatio N. Lay; Edward Burnet Tylor; and M. W. Mills Whitehouse, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

ACCESSIONS.—Among the donations to the Library and Map-rooms since received were—Baldwin's 'African Hunting;' Du Chaillu's 'Voyages et Aventures dans l'Afrique Equatoriale;' Wallich's 'North Atlantic Sea-Bed;' Report of the U.S. Colorado Exploring Expedition; Maps of the 'Novara's' Voyage round the World; Maps of the entrance to Chicago; Map of Japan, showing the route of Sir R. Alcock, from Nagasaki to Jeddo; Russian Map, from Pekin to Kiakhta; Johnston's Map of Australia, Eastern sheet; Stanford's Library Map of Asia, &c. &c.

EXHIBITIONS.—Several geological specimens from the Gold-diggings to the East of Kiakhta, as well as a Mongol rifle, obtained by Mr. Grant, and Relief Model of the island of St. Paul's, taken by the Austrian frigate 'Novara,' and presented by the Archduke Ferdinand Max, of Austria, were exhibited

The Papers read were—

1. *Narrative of a Journey from Tientsin to Mukden, in Manchuria.* By A. MICHIE, Esq.

THE author followed the coast and reached the Great Wall of China in six days from Tientsin. Here the mountains of the interior approach the shore; and the road to Manchuria, following the narrow plain between them, issues through the Wall at a well-guarded